ACRES 3.01 GRANTEE USER GUIDE

APRIL 2007

List of Appendices

Quick Reference Guides

I. INTRODUCTION

The Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) was created by EPA's Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment as the system of record for grant and property performance measures. This User Guide is a comprehensive reference document for using the system and provides step-by-step instructions for performing tasks in ACRES. Information is presented in the following sections:

I. *Introduction* – Highlights the objectives of this document, the importance of accurate data collection, program information related to ACRES, and the information process as related to ACRES

II. *Understanding the Basics* – Introduces elements of ACRES, including new terminology, system functions, and the details of how information flows through the system

III. *Getting Started in ACRES* – Instructs how to log in and access ACRES, introduces the Central Data Exchange (CDX), and summarizes the system modules and help function

IV. *Using Your ACRES Home Screen* – Provides description of the Home screen and how it functions

V. *Conducting Data Entry* – Highlights how to perform all forms of data entry in ACRES

- *Appendices and Quick Reference Guides* – Provide detail on certain subjects and other helpful supplemental information

Objectives of the ACRES User Guide

The objectives of this User Guide are to:

- Introduce ACRES as it relates to the Brownfields Program and the grant information process
- Highlight the key concepts, data sources and functions enabled in ACRES
- Describe how to use and navigate in ACRES
- Describe how to accurately enter data

Importance of Accurate Data

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requires federal programs to demonstrate programmatic results for funding received and/or requested. As such, the success of each federal program hinges on its ability to produce verifiable results and outcomes. To standardize the definition of these results, GPRA requires each federal program to establish quantifiable goals and to seek and justify

programmatic funding based on well-defined and outcome-related goals and objectives.
Based on the GPRA requirements, the Brownfields Program's ability to accurately track and report activities and achievements of its Grantees is vital to the success of the Program's mission. Brownfields Program reporting tools allow EPA to illustrate current activities, support continued funding, communicate success stories, and allow communities to benefit from the Brownfields Program's successful innovations. This programmatic information serves as an important outreach and educational tool for communities attempting to replicate the successful innovations currently underway in brownfields communities.

ACRES is designed to collect, track, update and report information related to the Brownfields Program in order to respond to Congressional and budgetary requests and address GPRA requirements. It also allows data to be collected in a manner that complies with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. ACRES allows for the creation of communication and outreach materials that convey Program achievements to a variety of internal and external audiences. Finally, ACRES facilitates data analyses across grants to improve the success of the Brownfields Program.

EPA Brownfield Programmatic Goals

EPA's Brownfields Program is designed to empower states, communities and other stakeholders to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse brownfields. The Program operated under the 1995 Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative until 2002, when the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (the Brownfields Law) was passed by Congress. The law provides EPA with expanded authority and funding to assist communities in addressing brownfields; it also clarified certain liability protections and enhanced state and tribal response programs.

> *Note: For more information on the Brownfields Law, visit: http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/sblrbra.htm*

EPA provides technical and financial assistance for brownfields activities through an approach based on four main goals: protecting human health and the environment, sustaining reuse, promoting partnerships, and strengthening the marketplace. Brownfields Grants serve as the foundation of the Brownfields Program and support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup and job training activities. To achieve these goals, EPA offers the following types of grant programs:

- *Assessment Grants* – Provide funding for brownfields inventories, site characterization and assessment, and to conduct planning and community outreach
- *Revolving Loan Fund Grants* – Provide funding to capitalize a revolving loan fund that provides sub-grants to carry out assessment and/or cleanup activities at brownfields
- *Cleanup Grants* – Provide funding to conduct and carry out cleanup activities at brownfields
- *Job Training Grants* – Provide funding for environmental job training for residents in communities affected by brownfields
- *Targeted Brownfields Assessments (TBA)* - Provide funding and/or technical assistance for environmental assessments at brownfields properties
- *Section 128(a) Grants* – Provide funding to states and tribes to establish and enhance voluntary response programs

II. UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

This section explains key terms and concepts that are critical to understanding how data are managed in ACRES and how ACRES facilitates the entry, review and approval of Brownfields Program data. These terms and concepts are used throughout this guide and are described here in the context of using ACRES. They are important for understanding the process by which data are handled in ACRES and how the user can access data and move data through the process.

Work Package

A *work package* is a distinct set of related data that must be edited or reviewed together. There are four different work packages in ACRES that move through the editing and review processes individually. For example, all the data that are entered on a Property Profile Form constitute a single work package. Because they move through the entry and review processes independently, multiple work packages for a single grant can be open at any given time. Below is a table depicting the data source(s) and the parties responsible for data entry for each of the four types of work packages.

Work Package	Source of Data	Data Entry
Property	Property Profile Form	Grantee Headquarters Region
Job Training Performance Measures	Job Training Reporting Form	Grantee Headquarters
Grant Information	Grant Profile Form Pilot Quarterly Report	Region Headquarters
Grant Comments	Grant Quarterly Report	Headquarters

Ownership

Ownership refers to the party responsible for a work package at a given time. The owner of a work package changes as the work package moves through the data entry and review processes in ACRES. There can only be one owner per work package at any given time.

Regional Review

The *Regional Review* is a detailed quality assurance review performed by the EPA Region on all data entered by Grantees to ensure that the information is accurate and complete. This includes all Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, Job Training, Cleanup, and Section 128(a) Grant data.

National Program Review

The *National Program Review* is a high-level review performed by Headquarters on all data in ACRES. The purpose of the National Program Review is to ensure that all data are consistent, with particular attention to changes in performance measure data.

Status

The *status* of a work package refers the point where the work package is in the data entry or review process at any given time. This information is tracked by ACRES for each work package and is displayed with the work package title. This helps make the data submission and review process more transparent and easily tracked.

Workflow

The *workflow* is the series of actions and states that a work package must pass through before being completed. Simply stated, a workflow is the process by which a work package moves through ACRES from beginning (data entry) to end (approved). As a work package moves along the workflow, its status changes with each step it goes through (e.g., Data Entry, Regional Review, National Program Review).

The ACRES workflow is depicted below in Figure 1, including the steps in each process and the status associated with each step.

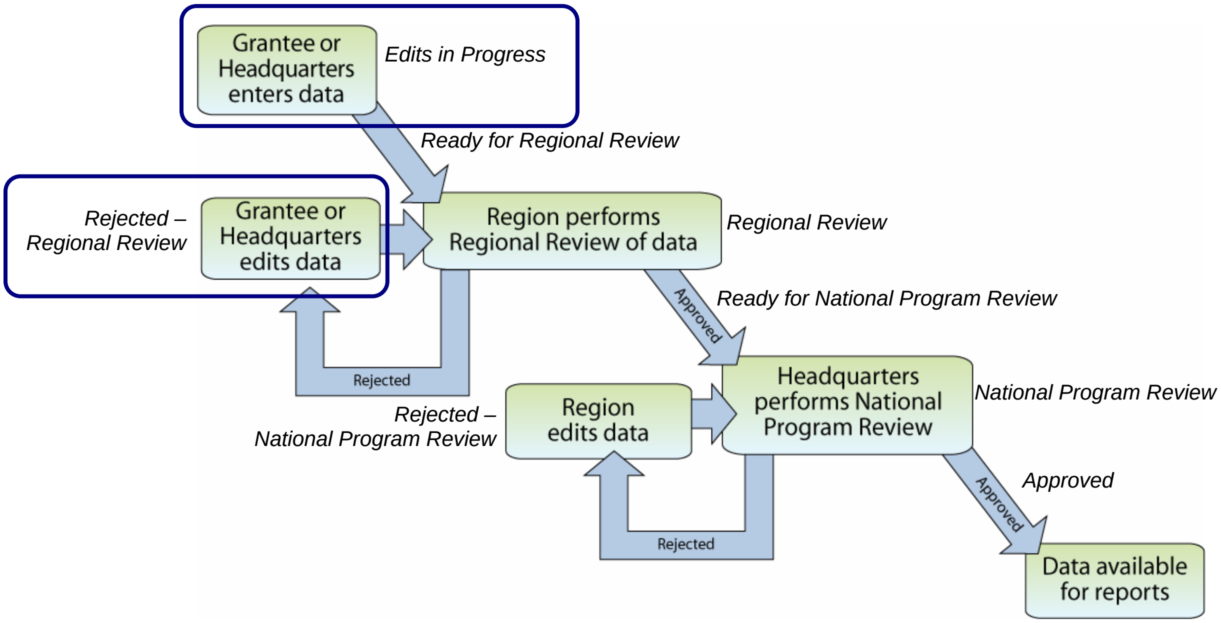

Figure II-1: Grantee Data Workflow

Grantees are responsible for the two steps circled above in the workflow: initiating a work package and making any edits after the Regional Review, if necessary. Grantees can access and modify a work package only when it is in either the "Edits in Progress" or the "Rejected – Regional Review" status. However, the current status of a work package is tracked in ACRES and can be looked up at any time. Each Region has the ability to see the current status of all work packages in the Region – so the Region can track when a work package has been started, even if they did not initiate data entry.

> *Note: If there is an active work package for a Property currently in ACRES, the user must wait for that work package to travel all the way through the workflow before they can start a new work package.*

III. GETTING STARTED IN ACRES

Access and Logging In

Access to ACRES is controlled by EPA's Central Data Exchange (CDX). In order to register with CDX for access to ACRES, Grantee users must have a valid eight-digit grant number. During CDX registration, the user will create a personalized user name and password, and enter their organization (i.e., employer) information. Registration with CDX is a one-time process; once a user name and password have been established, they are all that is needed to login to CDX and access ACRES. To register with CDX, go to https://cdx.epa.gov/SSL/CDX/DynPreReg.asp?flow=ACRES.

Once the user is registered with CDX, login to CDX at http://cdx.epa.gov. After signing into CDX, click the "ACRES: Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange" link in the *Available Account Profiles* section of the MyCDX Home screen. This will open ACRES. Some pop-up blockers may prevent the ACRES screen from loading on the first try. If this happens, disable the pop-up blocker for the EPA CDX web site.

> *Note: For further assistance with registering with CDX, see the Quick Reference Guide – First Time CDX Registration, or contact the CDX Help Desk at 1-888-890-1995.*

General Navigation

Navigation in ACRES is based on hyperlinks in the application. Generally, the linked text will tell you what function it performs. Although the program appears in a Web browser screen, it is important to use the navigation buttons provided within ACRES and NOT the browser buttons.

> *Note: Do NOT use the "Back" button in the Web browser as this may cause data to not be saved.*

There are several ways to navigate in ACRES: the module bar at the top of every screen, "bread crumb" links at the top of every screen, and linked text and buttons on the data entry screens.

Figure III-1: ACRES Module Bar

The module bar (see A above) is present across the top of every screen and provides access to the two modules in ACRES: Home and Data Entry. Therefore, from any screen in the application, the u return to their Home screen. ACRES also tracks a user's path through ACRES and provides "bread crumb" links (see B above) across the top of every screen, so the user can always return to where they were in the application.

Using Your ACRES Home Screen

When a user signs into ACRES for the first time, the grant that the user registered with through CDX is displayed on their Home screen. Grantee users can add a grant to their Home screen if they know the exact eight-digit grant number (i.e., cooperative agreement number) and the state.

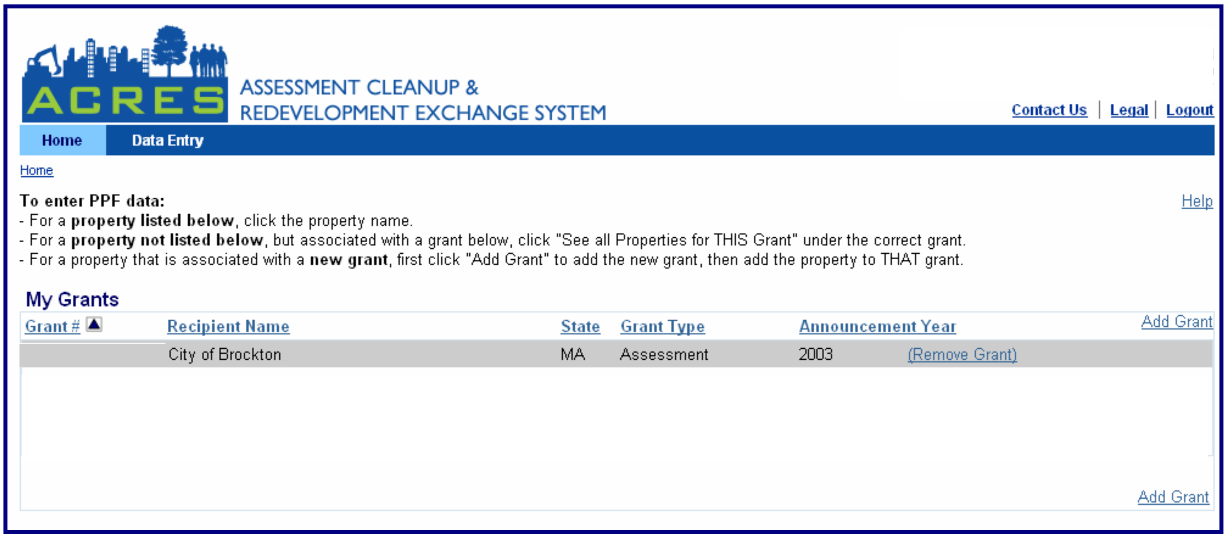

Figure III-2: Assessment, RLF, Cleanup, and Section 128(a) Grantee Home Screen

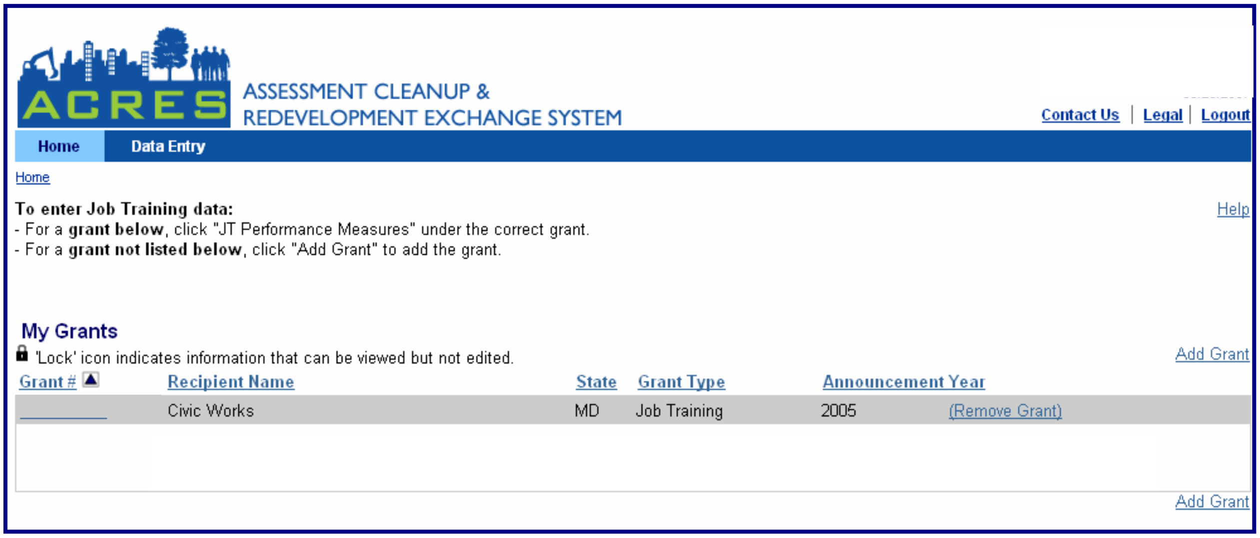

Figure III-3: Job Training Grantee Home Screen

Any active work package that the user has started and currently owns will appear on the user's Home screen under the grant with which it is associated. If the user needs to enter data for a grant that is NOT on their Home screen, the first step is to add the grant. Users are responsible for adding and removing grants on their Home screen, as appropriate. For example, if a user is the recipient of a new grant, that user will be responsible for adding that grant to their Home screen; it will not appear automatically.

To add a grant to the 'My Grants' box, follow these steps:

1. Click on the 'Add Grant' link.
2. On the 'Add Grant' screen, enter the exact eight digit grant number and the state for the grant.
3. Click 'Next.'
4. On the 'Confirm Add Grant' screen, if:
    a. The correct grant is displayed, click 'Confirm Grant' to return to the Home screen.
    b. The grant displayed is not the right grant, click 'Change Grant' to revise the search.

To remove a grant from the 'My Grants' box, follow these steps:

1. Click on the 'Remove Grant' link on the same line as the grant.
2. On the 'Confirm Remove Grant' screen, if:
    a. The correct grant is displayed, click 'Confirm Remove Grant' to return to the Home screen.
    b. The grant displayed is not the right grant, click 'Cancel Remove Grant' to return to the Home screen.

IV. CONDUCTING DATA ENTRY

This section provides details on the data entry process. Within the data entry screens there are a variety of validations. For a summary of these validations refer to Appendix A.

Grant Home – Assessment, RLF, Cleanup and Section 128(a) Grants

There is a Grant Home screen for every grant record in ACRES. From the Grant Home screen for Assessment, RLF, Cleanup, and Section 128(a) grants (shown below), the user can update information in an existing property record or enter a new property into ACRES.

Other features of the Grant Home screen include access to view information in Grant Profile Information and Grant Comments work packages, and the PPF Archive. Grant Profile Information and Grant Comments work packages contain information from Grant Profile Forms and/or Quarterly Reports. These work packages are entered by either the EPA Region or EPA Headquarters. The PPF Archive stores the data from each submission and approval of Property Profile Form data. The PPF Archive contains information for submissions and approvals since November 21, 2006.

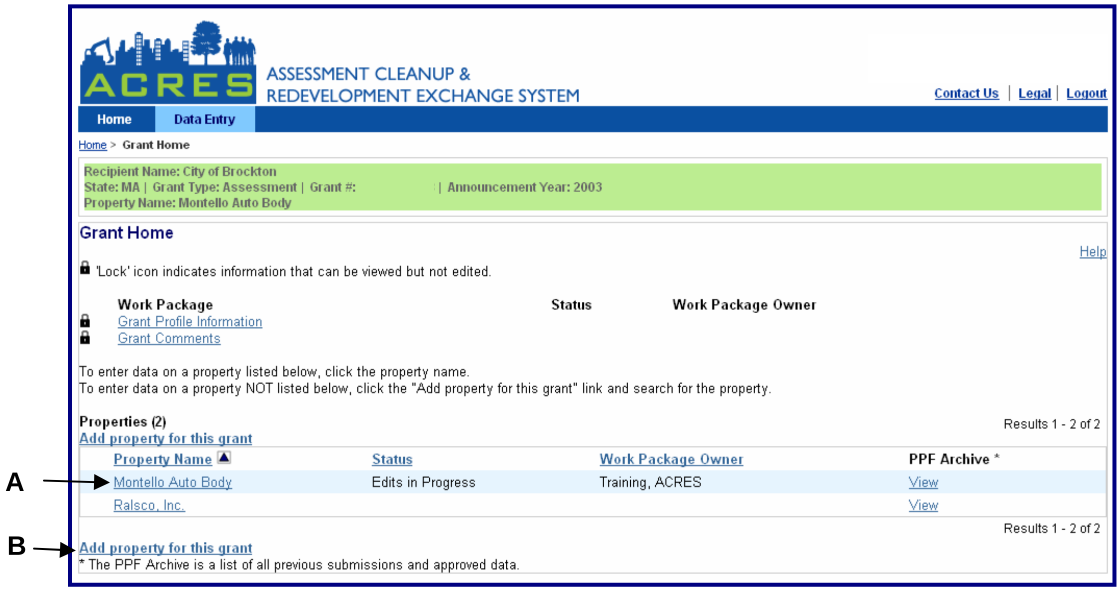

Figure IV-1: Assessment, RLF, Cleanup and Section 128(a) Grant Home

To open an active Property work package or to start a new Property work package, click on the property name (see A above). To add a property to the grant or to enter a new property record in ACRES, click "Add property for this grant" (see B above). Unless a property is already listed on the Grant Home screen, ACRES requires the user to search for a property before data entry can begin.

To start a Property work package for a property not listed on the Grant Home screen, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Add property for this grant; this loads the Property Search screen.
2. Enter the search criteria for the property and click 'Search;' this loads the Add Property to Grant screen.
3. If the property is in the search results, click 'Add to Grant' in the row corresponding to the property name. This adds the property to the Properties box on the Grant Home screen.
    a. To start a Property work package, click the property name on the Grant Home screen.
4. If the property is not in the search results, click 'Add New Property;' this loads a blank Property Background data entry screen and the user can enter a new property record.

> *Note: Because properties can be known by multiple names, it is recommended to search by property address or just city and state. This can help discourage the creation of multiple records for the same property.*

Property Profile Form Data Entry

ACRES is used to record, track and report on property-specific activities from the Assessment, RLF, and Cleanup (ARC) Grant programs, and Section 128(a) programs. All ARC and Section 128(a) Grantee users can create, edit and submit Property work packages.

For all properties tracked in ACRES, the source for property-specific data is the Property Profile Form. Generally, a Property work package should be created when there is new information to report about the activities at the property. The current version of the Property Profile Form is the July 2006 version. The sequence of property data entry fields in ACRES follows the sequence of fields on the July 2006 Property Profile Form. For Property Profile Form field to ACRES screen mapping, refer to Appendix B.

> *Note: The July 2006 Property Profile Form and instructions are available online at http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/pubs/rptforms.htm.*

There are seven property data entry screens in ACRES: Property Information, Environmental Assessment, Contaminants & Media, Institutional Controls, Environmental Cleanup, Redevelopment, and Anecdotal Property Info.

Property Information Screen

This screen records general address, history, geographic and ownership information for the property. On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Property Name*
- Property Address*, City*, State* and Zip Code*
- Property Size* (in acres)
- Parcel Number(s)
- Ownership Information
- Property History/Description
- Predominant Past Use
- Latitude / Longitude
- Horizontal Collection Method
- Source Map Scale Number
- Reference Point
- Horizontal Reference Datum

* Required fields; users are unable to submit the work package until all fields are completed.

Environmental Assessment Screen

This screen records property-specific environmental assessment data. On this screen the user enters the following information for each assessment activity:

- Assessment Phase
- Assessment Start Date
- Assessment Completion Date
- Assessment Activity Funding
- Cleanup Required Information

An assessment activity start date must be entered before funding can be added; a completion date is not required when the assessment activity is first entered. An assessment activity completion date can be entered simultaneously or added during a subsequent revision of the data.

On the Environmental Assessment data entry screen, if no previous environmental assessment data have been entered, the screen appears with space to add up to three assessment activity records. If data have been previously entered, a summary of each assessment and associated funding is displayed.

<u>Entering an Assessment Record</u>

If this is the first time the user is entering environmental assessment data for a property follow these steps:

1. Choose an assessment Phase number (I, II or III).
2. Enter a Start Date.
3. If the assessment activity has been completed, enter the Completion Date.

4. From the drop down menu select the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding. If any of the EPA funding sources are selected, the user does not need to enter any information into the Provider of Funds field.
    a. Click on 'Add More Funding for THIS Assessment' if you need to add more than three lines of funding for one assessment record. If you need to add more than three assessment activity records, click on 'Add Additional Assessment.'
5. Click on 'Save Changes' to complete the addition of the assessment activity.

Adding a Subsequent Assessment

If an environmental assessment has been previously entered and a subsequent assessment is completed and ready to be entered, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Add New Assessment' at the top of the Environmental Assessment screen.
2. Choose an assessment Phase number (I, II or III).
3. Enter a Start Date.
4. If the assessment activity has been completed, enter the Completion Date.
5. From the drop down menu select the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding. If any of the EPA funding sources are selected, the user does not need to enter any information into the Provider of Funds field.

Click 'Save Changes' to complete the addition of the assessment activity.

Editing an Existing Assessment

Editing Basic Information

The basic assessment information, Phase, Start Date, and Completion Date, can be edited on the environmental assessment data entry summary screen, the Add Funding screen, or the Edit Funding screen.

Editing Existing Funding Information

To edit funding information on an assessment activity, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Edit Funding' in the top right of the assessment activity box.
2. Revise the funding data by clicking in the field and typing in the new information.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

Adding Additional Funding Information

To add additional funding to an existing assessment activity, follow these steps:

1. On the Environmental Assessment screen, click on the 'Add Funding' link on the top right of the assessment activity box.
2. From the drop down menu select the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding. If any of the US EPA funding sources are selected, the user does not need to enter any information into the Provider of Funds field.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

<u>Adding a New Assessment</u>

If an environmental assessment has been previously entered and a subsequent assessment is completed and ready to be entered, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Add New Assessment' at the top of the Environmental Assessment screen.
2. Choose an assessment Phase number (I, II or III).
3. Enter a Start Date.
4. If the assessment activity has been completed, enter the Completion Date.
5. From the drop down menu select the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding. If any of the EPA funding sources are selected, the user does not need to enter any information into the Provider of Funds field.
6. Click 'Save Changes' to complete the addition of the assessment activity.

Contaminants & Media Screen

This screen records property-specific contamination and media affected data. On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Contaminants Found
- Contaminants Cleaned Up
- Media Affected
- Media Cleaned Up
- State/Tribal VCP Enrollment Information

Institutional Controls Data Entry Screen

This screen records institutional controls data. On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Institutional Controls Required, and the category of institutional control
- Institutional Controls in Place, and the date institutional controls were put in place

Environmental Cleanup Data Entry Screen

This screen records property-specific environmental cleanup data. On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Cleanup Activity Start Date
- Cleanup Activity Completion Date
- Acres Cleaned Up
- Cleanup Activity Funding

A cleanup activity start or completion date must be entered before funding can be entered.

<u>Entering Cleanup Funding Information for the First Time</u>

To enter cleanup activity funding, follow these steps:

1. Enter the cleanup activity start and/or completion date.
2. In the Add or Edit Category of Funding section of the screen, select from the drop down menu the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

<u>Adding Additional Cleanup Funding Information</u>

If cleanup funding had already been entered and additional funding needs to be entered, follow these steps:

1. Click on the 'Add Funding' link at the top of cleanup funding information box.
2. In the Add Funding Records portion of the screen select from the drop down menu the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding. If any of the EPA funding sources are selected, the user does not need to enter any information into the Provider of Funds field.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

<u>Editing Previously Entered Cleanup Funding Information</u>

To edit funding information on an assessment activity, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Edit Funding' in the top right of the assessment activity box.
2. Revise the funding data by clicking in the field and typing in the new information.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

Redevelopment & Other Leveraged Accomplishments Data Entry Screen

This screen records property-specific redevelopment and other leveraged accomplishments data.

On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Redevelopment Start Date
- Cleanup and Redevelopment Jobs Leveraged
- Future Use and Estimated Acreage
- Actual Acreage and Types of Greenspace Created
- Redevelopment Activity Leveraged Funding

Entering Redevelopment Funding Information for the First Time

To enter redevelopment activity funding, follow these steps:

1. Enter the redevelopment activity start date.
2. In the Add Category of Funding section of the screen, select from the drop down menu the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

Adding Additional Redevelopment Funding

If redevelopment funding has already been entered and additional funding needs to be entered, follow these steps:

1. Click 'Add Funding' at the top of redevelopment funding information box.
2. In the Add Category of Funding portion of the screen select from the drop down menu the Source of Funding, enter the Provider of Funds, and the Amount of Funding.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

Editing Previously Entered Redevelopment Funding

1. Click 'Edit Funding' at the top of cleanup funding information box.
2. Revise the funding data by clicking in the field and typing in the new information.
3. Click 'Save Changes.'

Anecdotal Property Information Data Entry Screen

This screen records property-specific anecdotal information. On this screen the user enters the following information:

- Property Highlights
- Photo/Video Availability

Submitting Property Data

Once the user is done entering data for a property, the data should be reviewed on the Review & Submit screen before submitting the work package for Regional Review.

To submit a work package, follow these steps:

1. Click ‘Review and Submit’ in the left navigation bar or at the bottom of any of the data entry screens to bring up the Review and Submit screen.
2. Review the data that were entered.
3. Click ‘Proceed to Submit’ at the bottom of the screen to bring up the Submit screen.
4. On the Submit screen, select name and enter the current date.
5. Click ‘Submit Information’ to submit the work package. You will get a Confirmation screen. Once the Confirmation screen loads, data entry is complete.

Grant Home – Job Training Grants

There is a Grant Home screen for every grant record in ACRES. From the Grant Home screen for Job Training grants (shown below), the user can open an active or start a new JT Performance Measures work package by clicking “JT Performance Measures.”

Other features of the Grant Home screen include access to view information in Grant Profile Information and Grant Comments work packages, and the PPF Archive. Grant Profile Information and Grant Comments work packages contain information from Grant Profile Forms and/or Quarterly Reports. These work packages are entered by either the EPA Region or EPA Headquarters.

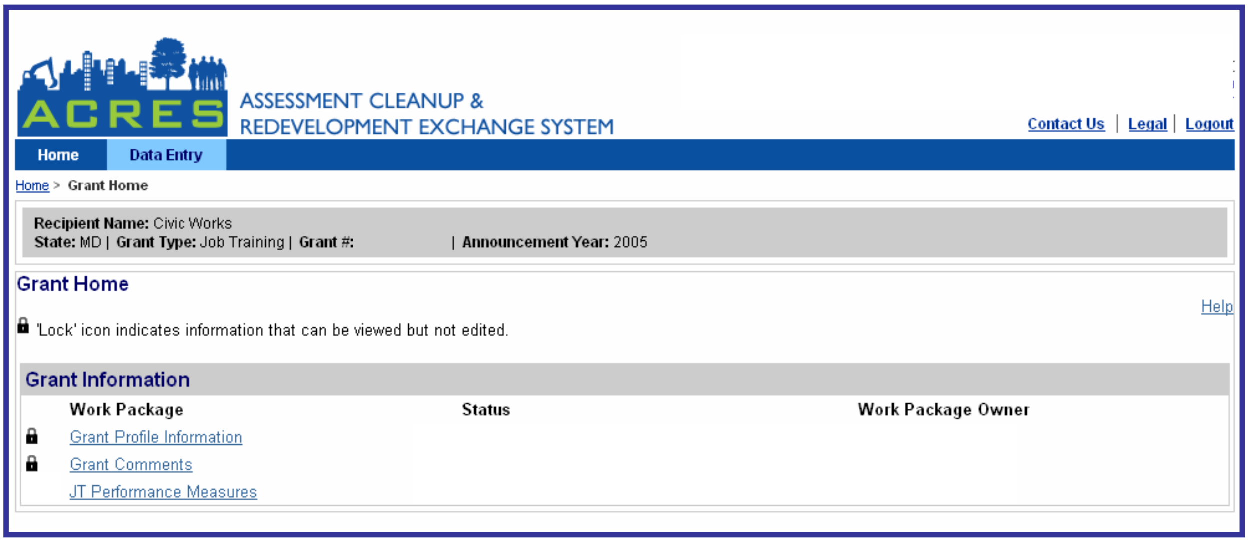

Figure IV-4: Job Training Grant Home

Job Training Reporting Form Data Entry

ACRES is used to record, track and report on activities from the Job Training Grant programs. All Job Training Grantee users can create, edit and submit JT Performance Measure work packages.

For all Job Training Grant activities reported in ACRES, the source for data is the Job Training Reporting Form. Generally, a JT Performance Measures work package should be created when there is new information to report about the activities. The sequence of property data entry fields in ACRES follows the sequence of fields on the form. For Job Training Reporting Form field to ACRES screen mapping, refer to Appendix C.

> *Note: The Job Training Reporting Form and instructions are available online at http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/pubs/rptforms.htm.*

Submission Notes and Reviewer Feedback

ACRES has built-in features to assist in communication between those responsible for data entry and those responsible for reviewing work packages. These features include Submission Notes and Reviewer Feedback notes that can be added to the work package.

- **Submission Notes –** These notes are for the use of those performing data entry. They can be used to ask questions or to otherwise communicate with the person performing quality assurance. These notes are automatically deleted once the work package has gone through the entire workflow process.

- **Reviewer Feedback –** These notes are for the use of those performing quality assurance to provide feedback or clarify questions on the data. Reviewer Feedback comments are specified by the section of the data entry screens to which they pertain. Reviewer Feedback will only be added to a work package if the work package is rejected, in order to provide guidance or explanation as to issues found during review. These notes are automatically deleted once the work package has gone through the entire workflow process.